

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 3992

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJ: BALANCE SHEET OF ARIAS NAVARRO'S POLITICAL PROGRAM

REF: A-122 OF 5/23/75

SUMMARY: LITTLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS GOAL ANNOUNCED BY PRIME MINISTER ARIAS IN FEBRUARY 1974 OF PROMOTING "POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT" CAPABLE OF PROVIDING "NATIONAL CONSENSUS" NEEDED BY FUTURE KING JUAN CARLOS TO MAKE UP FOR FRANCO'S AUTHORITY AND CHARISMA ONCE HE IS GONE. OF FOUR SPECIFIC POLITICAL PROMISES MADE BY ARIAS NAVARRO ONLY ONE -- A LIMITED STATUTE ON POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS -- HAS BEEN PROMULGATED AND EVEN IT HAS FAILED SO FAR TO ELICIT PARTICIPATION FROM MANY GROUPS REPRESENTING WHAT ARIAS CALLED "REAL PLURALISM". MAIN OBJECTIVE OF GOVT POLICY -- PRESERVATION OF INTERNAL ORDER AT ALL COSTS -- HAS TURNED OUT TO BE SINE QUA NON FOR POLITICAL EVOLUTION. THE GOVT HAS TENDED TO REACT WITH REPRESSIVE MEASURES TO PRESSURES EMANATING FROM CERTAIN AREAS OF DISSENT WHICH ARE SEEN TO CONTAIN SEEDS OF THREAT TO NATIONAL UNITY AND COHESION, E.G., REGIONALISM, LABOR, CHURCH, UNIVERSITIES, AND THE MEDIA. EXTENSIVE POLICE AND SECURITY EFFORTS, HOWEVER, HAVE FAILED TO CONTROL ALL THREATS TO PUBLIC  
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ORDER EXPOSING GOVT TO ATTACKS FROM EXTREME RIGHT WING WHICH HAS

USED ITS POWER TO THWART POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. WITH SUPREME POLITICAL POWER STILL IN HANDS OF FRANCO, ARIAS HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONTAIN THESE RIGHT WING FORCES AND CHAMPION CAUSES WHICH HE PROFESSED TO BE MAIN FEATURES OF PROGRAM HE ANNOUNCED IN EARLY 1974. AS A CONSEQUENCE, GOVT LEADERSHIP IS SEEN AS WAVERING BETWEEN SUPPORT FOR GENERAL PRINCIPLE OF LIBERALIZATION AND COMPLUSION TO PLACATE RIGHT WING FORCES. RESULT IS EXCESSIVE GOVT CAUTION AND UNWILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS, DISILLUSIONMENT IN POLITICAL CIRCLES, AND APATHY IN POPULATION AT LARGE TOWARDS A PROGRAM WHICH INITIALLY ELICITED SOME ENTHUSIASM BUT HAS LOST ITS MOMENTUM AND SOME OF ITS CREDIBILITY. END SUMMARY

1. PROGRAM ANNOUNCED BY PRIMIER ARIAS NAVARRO FEB 12, 1974 WAS WIDELY HAILED AT THAT TIME AS A MAJOR COMMITMENT TOWARDS GRADUAL BUT PURPOSEFUL LIBERALIZATION OF POLITICAL SYSTEM. ARIAS SAID CENTRAL PROBLEM WAS TO CREAT BASIS FOR NATIONAL CONSENSUS ON WHICH AUTHORITY OF FUTURE KING, JUAN CARLOS, COULD BE BASED, SINCE "ADHESION" WHICH SUPPORTED RANCO WOULD HAVE TO BE REPLACED WITH "PARTICIPATION" UNDER JUAN CARLOS. HE PROMISED TO PROVIDE FOR BROADER PARTICIPATION REFLECTING "REAL PLURALISM" BASED ON "LIBERAL INFORMATION POLICY" TO INSURE THT PEOPLE WERE PROPERLY AND ADEQUATELY INFORMED. ARIAS PROMISED DRAFT LAWS IN FOLLOWING AREAS: POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, LOCAL GOVT, PARLIAMENTARY INCOMPATIBILITIES, AND SYNDICAL CRAFT ASSOCIATIONS. AT SAME TIME HE STRESSED THAT SINE QUA NON FOR ANY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS WAS PRESERVATION OF INERNAL ORDER. GOVT WOULD NOT STAND FOR ANY TERRORISM OF "ANY IN-TERFERENCE IN MATTERS RESERVED FOR CIVIL AUTHORITY" BY CHURCH.

2. SEVENTEEN MONTHS AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOVT PROGRAM, ARIAS HAS KEPT HIS WORD ABOUT THE MAIN EMPHASIS OF GOVT POLICY: PRESERVATION OF LAW AND ORDER. MINISTER OF INTERIOR'S RESOURCES HAVE BEEN AUGMENTED TO PROVIDE FOR A BETTER EQUIPPED CIVIL GUARD AND SECURITY FORCES AND THESE HAVE BEEN USED TO ENSURE PUBLIC ORDER IN LABOR SECTOR, UNIVERSITIES, AND IN REGIONAL DISTURBANCES. SEVEN HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR PERSONS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED SINCE FEB 12, 1975 FOR ILLEGAL MEETINGS, DEMONSTRATIONS, AND OTHER "CRIMES". GOVT HAS NOT HESITATED TO EXECUTE CONVICTED MURDERER WHOSE ANARCHIST SYMPATHIES ELICITED INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT AND CRITISISM OF SPAIN. NOR

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HAS IT HESITATED TO ORDER A STATE OF EXCEPTION IN TWO BASQUE PROVINCES WHERE VARIOUS POLICEMEN HAVE BEEN ASSASSINATED BY ETA TERRORIST IN RECENT MONTHS. FACULTIES OF SOME UNIVERSITIES HAVE BEEN CLOSED AND THE UNIV OF VALLADOLID WAS CLOSED DOWN ENTIRELY BECAUSE OF DISTURBANCES AND CHALLENGE TO AUTHORITY. NOTWITHSTANDING EXTENSIVE GOVT EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC ORDER, THERE HAS BEEN INCREASE IN DISORDERS IN BASQUE PROVINCES AND RESURGENCE OF DISTURBANCES IN UNIVERSITIES WHICH HAVE EM-

BOLDENED RIGHT WING FORCES TO ATTACK GOVT FOR FAILURE TO PRESERVE ORDER. PUBLIC ORDER HAS BEEN FUTHER IMPAIRED BY SURGE OF RIGHT WING COUNTER-TERRORISM AGAINST BASQUE SEPARATIST SYMPATHIZERS IN NORTH, AT TIMES WITH POLICE ACQUIESCENCE.

3. GOVT TREATMENT OF MEDIA HAS BEEN BEST TEST OF ITS COMMITMENT TO LIBERALIZATION. ARIAS HIMSELF MADE IT A TOUCHSTONE OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. INITIALLY, OFFICIAL TREATMENT OF MEDIA WAS MORE LIBERAL THAN EVER BEFORE. BUT BY FALL OF 1974, WITH REMOVAL OF MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM PIO CABANILLAS, LIBERAL TIDE HAD BEGUN TO EBB, PRINCIPALLY OWING TO PRESSURES FROM ENTRENCHED RIGHT WING OPPONENTS OF LIBERALIZATION PERSONALLY CLOSE TO FRANCO WHO VIEWED PRESS AS LEAVENING IN WHAT THEY SAW AS DESTABILIZING PROCESS. IN RECENT WEEKS, PARTLY BECAUSE OF PRESS' CONSTANT EFFORTS TO RAISE PLATEAU OF OFFICIAL TOLERANCE, GOVT HAS INCREASED SUPERVISION OF MEDIA INCLUDING SEQUESTRATIONS, CENSORSHIP, AND OFFICIAL GUIDANCE ON LIMITS OF NEWS COVERAGE AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS. ALTHOUGH LEVEL OF PRESS FREEDOM REMAINS CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN ONLY SEVERAL YEARS AGO, IT HAS DROPPED DURING PAST HALF-YEAR AND NOW FALLS SHORT OF ARIAS' EARLIER PROMISES AND HIS OWN DEFINITION OF PRECONDITIONS FOR INFORMED PUBLIC.

4. OF FOUR LEGISLATIVE PROMISES MADE BY ARIAS -- POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, PARLIAMENTARY INCOMPATIBILITIES, LOCAL GOVT, SYNDICAL ASSOCIATIONS -- ONLY THE FIRST HAS BEEN PROMULGATED AS A DECREE LAW, THE SECOND TWO HAVE BOGGED DOWN IN PARLIAMENT (CORTES), AND NO CONCRETE ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON FOURTH, WHICH REQUIRES NO FURTHER LEGISLATION. ON WIDER ISSUE OF POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS OR INTEREST GROUPS GOVT HAS FOLLOWED PRACTICE SINCE FALL, 1974 OF PROHIBITING ACTIVITIES AND DISBANDING ASSOCIATIONS OF ORGANIZED GROUPS (E.G., "SUPPORTERS OF UN", "DIOCESAN ASSEMBLIES"), WHICH ADVOCATED

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SPECIFIC ACTION FOR REDRESS OF LOCAL COMPLAINTS. ARIAS HAD ORIGINALLY URGED SPANIARDS TO CHANNEL DEMANDS AND ASPIRATIONS INTO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BECOME "PARTICIPANTS" IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS. DURING HONEYMOON OF LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM FREQUENTLY QUOTED ARIAS STATEMENT WAS "CRITICISM OF GOVT IS A FORM OF COLLABORATION". GOVT CRACK-DOWN IN THESE NUMEROUS, OSTENSIBLY NON-POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS SEEN HERE AS SIGNAL THAT HENCEFORTH ONLY OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE CHANNEL FOR ARTICULATING POLITICAL DEMANDS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MADRID 3992

5. ARIAS NAVARRO'S EFFORTS TO ELICIT COOPERATION OF "CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS" AND "SOCIALIZING" GROUPS IN ORGANIZING POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, AS WELL AS FROM MODERATE REFORMIST LEADERS SUCH AS MANUEL FRAGA IRIBARNE, HAVE SO FAR COME TO NAUGHT. NEW STATUTE HAS MERELY SPAWNED A HOST OF TENTATIVE ORGANIZATION EFFORTS BY SPLINTER GROUPS OR FACTIONS LINKED TO REGIME NONE OF WHICH GIVES EVIDENCE OF BROAD POPULAR BASE. TWO POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS HAVE BEEN PROVISIONALLY APPROVED, ALTHOUGH ANOTHER LED BY FORMER PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER SILVA MUNOZ AND OTHERS IDENTIFIED WITH LIBERAL CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS IS CLOSE TO OBTAINING OFFICIAL STANDING. AT THIS MOMENT FRAGA AND SILVA ARE PROBABLY ONLY TWO POLITICIANS WITH SUFFICIENT BACKING AND FOLLOWING WHO COULD LEAD POLITICAL MOVEMENT WITH REAL CLOUT. GOVT CONTINUES TO PIN ITS HOPES ON THESE TWO MEN TO MAKE SUCCESS OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS. GOVT SPOKEMEN'S URGINGS THAT FRAGMENTATION BE AVOIDED AND THAT ONLY THREE OR FOUR ASSOCIATIONS BE FORMED HAVE ALSO BEEN UNHEEDED. SLOW START, THEREFORE, COUPLED WITH ABSENCE OF LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION BY ASSOCIATIONS, HAS LED MANY OBSERVERS TO CONCLUDE THAT THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO HAVE ANYTHING MORE THAN MARGINAL EFFECT ON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR FALL 1975. MOREOVER, ABSENCE OF LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON DRAFT LAW ON PARLIAMENTARY INCOMPATIBILITIES, WHICH WOULD

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ELIMINATE SOME SENIOR EXECUTIVE BRANCH OFFICIALS FROM CORTES, HAS FURTHER QEDERMINED POPULAR CONFIDENCE IN USEFULNESS OF ELECTIONS (RATE OF ABSTENTION IN PRIVIOUS MUNICIPAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS VARIED FROM 40-80 PERCENT DEPENDING ON LOCALITY). THIS FACTOR WILL BE REINFROCED IF GOVT OR CORTES WATERS DOWN LOCAL GOVT REFORM BILL, WHICH GIVE CITIZENS DIRECT VOTE FOR MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILS BUT NOT FOR MAYORS.

6. TALLY OF OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS OF ARRESTS SINCE FEBRUARY 12,1975 REVEALED THAT STUDENTS WERE LARGEST GROUP (276). NEW WAVE OF DISORDERS IN PAST YEAR LED TO CLOSURE IN FEBRUARY 1975 OF UNIV OF VALLADOLID AND SELECTED FACULTIES OF OTHER UNIVERSITY CENTERS FOR DURATION ACADEMIC YEAR. DECREE ON STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS ISSUED IN EARLY FALL 1974 FAILED TO ELICIT DESIRED STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND WHERE THERE WAS PARTICIPATION LEFTIST ELEMENTS OFTEN WALKED AWAY WITH ELECTORAL SPOILS. ACADEMICANS AND OBSERVERS VIEW UNIVERSITIES AS SEETHING WITH FERMENT STEMMING FROM OFFICIAL INACTION TO MEET PRACTICAL PROBLEMS ARISING FROM TREMENDOUS GROWTH IN ENROLLEMENT (1969 - 200,000; 1975 - 400,000); FACILITIES, STAFF, EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT, UP-TO-DATE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, AND CHANNELS FOR STUDENT REPRESENTATION. INEFFORT TO ASSUAGE FRUSTRATIONS OF STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES, GOVT DECIDED MAY 9 TO ALLOW STUDENTS AT UNIV OF VALLADOLID TO TAKE FINAL EXAMINATIONS. THIS STEP, WHILE WELCOME IN REMOVING ONE FOCUS OF FREMENT, FAILS TO DEAL WITH ROOTS OF UNIVERSITY PROBLEMS.

7. ALTHOUGH GOVT HAS NOT YET LIVED UP TO PROMISE TO PERMIT SYNDICAL ASSOCIATIONS, IT PROPOSED MAY 9 DECREE-LAW TO GRANT A MODIFIED AND HEAVILY CIRCUMSCRIBED RIGHT TO STRIKE FOR THE FIRST TIME, PRESUMABLY IN RESPONSE TO PRESSURES STEMMING FROM ONE OF MOST STRIKE-TORN YEARS OF REGIME. STATUTE IS MODEST FORWARD STEP IN MEETING REALITY OF LABOR SITUATION. MAIN DEMAND OF WORKERS -- INDIPENDENT AND CEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED WORKER-LED UNIONS -- STILL REMAINS UNSATISIFED, AND A MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK FOR SPAIN'S POLITICAL ACCEPTABILITY WITH ORGANIZED LABOR IN EUROPE AND U.S. OFFICIAL POLICY AIMS TO PLACATE LABOR WITH COMBINATION OF FLEXIBLE APPLICATION OF OFFICIAL GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL WAGE INCREASES, GRUDGING LEGISLATIVE RECOGNITION OF LIMITED RIGHT OT STRIKE, AND RELATIVELY FREE FACTORY-LEVEL SYNDICAL ELECTIONS WHICH HAVE JUST BEEN CONVOKED FOR JUNE.

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8. GOVT HAS FOLLOWED CARROT AND STICK POLICY IN MAJOR PROBLEM AREA OF REGIONALISM, E.G., CATALONIA, BASQUE PROVINCES. TWO BASIC PRINCIPLES OF FRANCO SYSTEM, DEFENSE OF EXISTING POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESERVATION OF NATIONAL UNITY, ARE QUESTIONED BY OPPOSITION GROUPS IN CATALONIC AND BASQUE PROVINCES. ORGANIZED POLITICAL/ECONOMIC/CULTURAL PRESSURES IN BOTH REGIONS

POSE REAL ISSUES FOR A GOVT OVER LONG RUN. PRESUMABLY, IN RECOGNITION OF THIS SITUATION, GOVT DECIDED MAY 9 TO ALLOW ON VOLUNTARY BASIS INSTRUCTION IN PROVINCIAL LANGUAGES BEGINNING SCHOOL YEAR 1975-76. MEANWHILE, INCIDENCE OF TERRORISM IN BASQUE PROVINCES REACHED A NEW PEAK IN EARLY MAY. (IN EARLY JUNE, HOWEVER, GOVT SPEKESMAN SUGGESTED FURTHER CONCESSIONS, SUCH AS GREATER FISCAL AUTONOMY MIGHT BE GRANTED BSQUES.)

9. RELATIONS WITH CHURCH HAVE CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE UNDER ARIAS. A MAJOR CONFRONTATION OVER PASTORAL STATEMENTS OF BISHOP OF BILBAO IN SPRING OF 1974 EVENTUALLY FORCED GOBT TO BACK DOWN IN ITS HARD STAND. SINCE THEN, HOWEVER, GOVT HAS PROHIBITED MEETINGS OF DIOCESAN ASSEMBLIES INVOLVING LAYMEN AS WELL AS PRISTS AND OTHERWISE INHIBITED CHURCH ACTIVITIES LINKED IN ANY WAY WITH SECULAR AFFAIRS. NUMBER OF PRIESTS FINED BY GOBT FOR OFFENSIVE SERMONS HAS RISEN SIGNIFICANTLY. CHURCH HAS RESPONDED IN KIND WITH RENEWED APPEALS FOR FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND OTHER DEMANDS MADE BY NATIONAL EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE. ON BALANCE ARIAS' REFERENCE TO "CONFLICTS" WITH THE CHURCH IN HIS FEBRUARY 12 SPEECH WAS ALREADY A RECOGNITION OF A STATE OF AFFAIRS WHICH HAS BEEN EXACERBATED IN THE INTERIM.

10. ACTIONS OF GOVT IN COPING WITH FOREGOING MAJOR PROBLEM AREAS GIVES IMPRESSION OF ABSENCE OF DECISIVE LEADERSHIP OR STRONG SENSE OF DIRECTION. EVEN IN PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ORDER, GOVT HAS HAD DIFFICULTY LIVING UP TO ITS PROMISES, AT LEAST IN THE EYES OF RIGHT WING ELEMENTS. OPTIMISM WHICH CHARACTERIZED POPULAR RECEPTION OF NEW GOVT'S PROGRAM IN FEBRUARY 1974 HAS TURNED INTO APATHY, WAIT-AND-SEE SKEPTICISM, AND SOME DIS-ILLUSIONMENT. RIGHT WING ELEMENTS HAVE EVEN PUBLICLY ASKED FOR ARIAS' RESIGNATION. MANY SPANIARDS THOUGHT ARIAS WOULD ASSERT HIS LEADERSHIP TO "ALLEVIATE THE CAUDILLO OF THE BURDEN" AS HE HAD PROMISED AND INITIATE CHANGES CONSISTENT WITH THE REGIME'S PRINCIPLES USHERING IN THE POST-FRANCO TRANSITION. CONFIDENTIAL

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INSTEAD, THE TRANSITION HAS BEGUN, BUT WITH THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF CONTRADICTORY SIGNALS BY THE GOVT ON THE THRUST OF POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. WHILE POPULATION AS WHOLE CONTINUES TO BECOME INCREASINGLY POLITICIZED, AMONG POLITICALLY ACTIVE CLASS -- EVEN IN GOVT -- THERE HAS BEEN RELAPSE INTO INDIFFERENCE AND CYNICISM, IN BELIEF THAT NO RAL POLITICAL CHANGES ARE FEASIBLE AS LONG AS FRANCO LIVES. RIGHT WING FORCES CAN USE HIS AUTHORITY TO ENFORCE ADHERENCE TO REGIME'S TRADITIONAL PRECEPTS. CONCLUSION DRAWN AMONG BOTH MODERATE OPPOSITIONISTS AND IN-HOUSE REFORMERS IS THAT ARIAS GOVT WAS SINCERE IN ITS INTENTIONS TO LIBEALIZE BUT AFTER MORE THAN 35 YEARS OF AUTHORITARIANISM DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO GO ABOUT IT, OR IS UNABLE TO ACT DECISIVELY AS LONG AS FRANCO REMAINS IN POWER. STABLER

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## Message Attributes

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